FBIS DAILY REPORT

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

6 AUGUST 1984

Israel

President Hayim Herzog announced over Jerusalem radio on 5 August that he has entrusted Labor Party leader Shim'on Peres with the task of forming a new government, based on the fact that during his consultations with the various Knesset factions, the largest number of Knesset members recommended the candidacy of Peres, who also heads the list that obtained more votes than any other list. The radio had reported that 60 of the 120 Knesset members recommended Peres for the prime ministership, 54 recommended Shamir, and 6 did not express a preference. Herzog also said that he emphasized to Peres the widespread will of the people for a government that symbolizes stability and unity in a situation that all parties had agreed has deteriorated into the "most difficult and dangerous economic circumstances that the state has experienced since its establishment."

In accepting the offer to form a government, Peres stated in a speech broadcast by Jerusalem radio that he will act to establish a "government of rapprochement" that will have to combat the economic problems, secure the safety of Galilee and then return the soldiers from Lebanon, renew the peace process, secure equal rights for all citizens, and maintain the status quo in religious matters. He later disclosed during a press conference carried by the radio that he is planning to establish the "broadest possible government, a government of national unity." With this aim in mind, Peres scheduled a meeting for 6 August with the Likud leader, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, the radio reported. While acknowledging Herzog's decision to entrust Peres with forming a government, Shamir expressed his belief that the Likud still will be able to form either a narrowly based or a unity government, according to IDF radio.

Red Sea Explosions

A Liberian-registered tanker hit a mine in the Red Sea late on 4 August, causing one of its main tanks to explode, AFP reported citing a source in Cairo. The vessel was believed to be still afloat, AFP said, despite earlier reports that it was sinking. The incident occurred toward the southern end of the sea, west of the Saudi coastal town of Al-Qunfudhah.

Commenting on the series of explosions in the Red Sea, "observers" cited by MENA called for urgent measures to safeguard shipping and ascertain the causes of the incidents, which are a "serious threat" to navigation in the area. Israel is also concerned about the explosions, according to Jerusalem radio, and Israeli political sources consider it likely that Iranian or Libyan agents laid the mines from bases in the PDRY. Earlier, a PDRY commentary carried by Aden radio condemned attempts to provoke tension in the Red Sea but warned against using such incidents as a pretext and justification for "imperialist" military intervention in the area.

Gulf War Diplomacy

Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad received the Kuwaiti foreign minister, who delivered a message on the situation in the Gulf from the Kuwaiti amir, KUNA reported on 5 August. The Syrian leader also received a message the same day from his Iranian counterpart 'Ali Khamene'i, delivered by Iranian Revolution Guards Minister Mohsen Rafiqdust, Damascus television noted. Before meeting Al-Asad, Rafiqdust held talks with Syrian Defense Minister Mustafa Talas, who stressed Syria and Iran's agreement that the Iran-Iraq war should not be expanded, that no Gulf state should become involved in the conflict, and that oil tankers should not be attacked, according to Damascus radio. Rafiqdust affirmed that Iran will not attack oil tankers passing through the Gulf and that his country has no designs on Arab land, the radio added.

Meanwhile, an Iraqi delegation headed by RCC Vice Chairman 'Izzat Ibrahim discussed the Gulf situation in talks with officials in Kuwait and Bahrain, according to KUNA and Manama radio. In another Gulf development, a Saudi Royal Air Force squadron arrived in Oman to conduct a joint exercise with the Sultanate's Air Force, Salalah radio noted.

Jordan

Military Delegation to USSR — A military delegation headed by the Armed Forces commander in chief left for the Soviet Union on 5 August, Amman radio reported. The Jordanian delegation will visit a number of Soviet military centers during the visit, which is in response to an invitation from the chief of the Soviet Armed Forces General Staff. In a related report, sources in London cited by KUNA stated that the Jordanian delegation will conclude a deal for the purchase of "sophisticated" Soviet weapons, including missiles, aircraft, tanks, ships, and radars.

Bomb Explosion — A "minor explosion" occurred on 3 August near a U.S. Embassy storage depot, an Interior Ministry spokesman disclosed in a statement broadcast by Amman radio.

Iran

Aftermath of Hijacking — The three Lebanese who hijacked an Air France Boeing 737 last week have asked Iran to grant them political asylum, a Foreign Ministry spokesman announced in a statement reported by IRNA. The Iranian authorities are continuing to investigate their case, he noted. As for French press allegations that the Iranians assisted the hijackers by allowing them access to weapons in their luggage, the spokesman maintained that the hijackers took arms and explosives from the cargo compartment under the pretext of obtaining medicine for one of the passengers.

Commenting on the hijacking the Islamic Republican Party newspaper *JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI* stressed that the "children of Islam" will continue to deal "the necessary blows" against the French Government, terming the "diversion" of the French plane "an act against terrorism," according to AFP.

In Paris, former President Abolhasan Bani-Sadr speculated that the hijacking was arranged by certain groups in the Iranian regime in order to undermine those officials who favor improved relations with the West, the clandestine Free Voice of Iran radio reported. According to Bani-Sadr, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni failed to express an opinion on the hijackers because he is very ill.

Majlis Vote — The Majlis voted 163 to 21 in favor of the vote of confidence called for by Prime Minister Mir-Hoseyn Musavi, IRNA reported on 5 August. Twenty-five deputies abstained in the vote, which followed a 6-hour debate during which the prime minister reviewed and defended his government's record. Supporting the motion, Majlis Speaker 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani praised the government's successes though he admitted that affairs could have been managed better, according to IRNA.

Lebanon

Political Developments — The security plan for the Ash-Shuf mountain area will top all other issues at the Cabinet session on 8 August, Beirut radio reported. The Cabinet was expected to consider a new formula for this plan during an extraordinary session on 6 August but the meeting was canceled because contacts in this regard "failed," the radio noted. Earlier, Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) leader Walid Junblatt stressed that he has obstructed the security plan because the PSP wants to be sure that when the Army enters the Druze areas, it will also enter the Maronite areas controlled by the Phalangists. In his remarks, which were broadcast by the PSP's clandestine Voice of the Mountain radio, Junblatt also warned that his forces will not lay down their weapons until "a minimum of balance" has been established in the army.

Military/Security Situation — Although Beirut radio reported that the Lebanese Army fired at Israeli gunboats that approached the Beirut coast on 3 August, the IDF spokesman subsequently denied any knowledge of this incident, according to Jerusalem radio. In southeastern Lebanon, an IDF soldier was killed and two others were wounded when their vehicle hit a mine in the 'Ammiq area on 5 August, Jerusalem television reported. Around 270 "attempted attacks" against the IDF have been recorded since April, according to Jerusalem radio. In a separate development, Beirut radio reported that the PSP has reached a security agreement with Al-Murabitun, the Sunni militia in Beirut which has clashed with PSP forces in the past.

Polyakov Visit — Diplomatic sources cited by Beirut radio confirmed that Lebanon welcomes the convocation of an international conference on the Middle East problem, as proposed by Soviet envoy Vladimir Polyakov during his talks with Lebanese officials in Beirut over the weekend. The Lebanese asked Polyakov for a "positive" Soviet stand toward Lebanon's demand for a renewal of the UNIFIL mandate, the sources added.

Afghanistan

President Babrak Karmal returned to Afghanistan on 3 August after completing a general medical checkup in the Soviet Union, Kabul radio announced.

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Karmal Returns After 'Medical Checkup' in USSR

LD031422 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1230 GMT 3 Aug 84

[Excerpt] Babrak Karmal, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and president of the DRA Revolutionary Council, returned home safely at noon today after completing a general medical checkup in the USSR. Babrak Karmal's special plane landed at Kabul Airport at 1150 this morning.

He was welcomed by Soltan Ali Keshtmand, chairman of the DRA Council of Ministers, members and secretaries of the PDPA Central Committee Politburo, vice chairman of the Revolutionary Council, vice chairman of the Revolutionary Council Presidium, the ministers of internal and foreign affairs, and the charge d'affaires of the USSR Embassy in Kabul.

AFP Reports Return

BK040027 Hong Kong AFP in English 0021 GMT 4 aug 84

[Excerpt] Islamabad, Aug 3 (AFP) — Afghan ruler Babrak Karmal returned to Kabul today after a visit of more than three weeks to the Soviet Union, Radio Kabul said in a report monitored here, dismissing reports that he was ill.

Mr. Karmal left Kabul on July 9 for a "general medical examination", but Radio Kabul today dismissed rumours that the Soviet-backed ruler's stay had been prolonged because he was in "bad physical condition". He had been given a clean bill of health after detailed medical examination in Moscow, the radio added.

Some sources had reported that Mr. Karmal had been injured when fighting broke out during the ruling party's Central Committee meeting in Kabul early last month.

Court Investigates Charges Against Rebels

LD052214 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 5 Aug 84

[Text] Our working compatriots know that some time ago an armed group led by Abdol Qodus, known as Qodus-e Kal [bald Qodus], one of the leaders of the Harakat-e Enqelab-e Islami band, was crushed in an armed encounter with the vigilant security forces of the country in Dewali Maydan village, Balkh district, Balkh Province. As a result, Qodus-e Kal along with 35 members of his band were captured by the security forces which seized armed and ammunition from them.

The dossier of the accused, which mainly includes committing crimes against the internal security of the country, against the gains of the April Revolution, against people's life and property, and disruption of public peace in the north of the country, has recently been completed and referred to the Special Revolutionary Court by the Special Revolutionary Prosecutor Office of the DRA.

A BAKHTAR correspondent reports that the open judicial session of the DRA Special Revolutionary Court to investigate the charges against the accused was held this morning at 1000. The session was attended by more than 500 citizens of Kabul city.

In today's session, which continued from 1000 to 1200 and 1400 to 1630, the charges against a number of the accused were read to the court by the prosecutor. Then, a number of the accused, in a complete, free, and democratic atmosphere using the right of defense, as stated in the basic principles and relevant laws of the DRA, presented their defenses against the charges.

The BAKHTAR correspondent adds that the investigation of this case is continuing, and its proceedings will be brought to the attention of compatriots through the mass media.

Mujahidin Foil Government Attack in Qandahar

BK031112 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 3 Aug 84

[Text] According to a report from Afghanistan, the Afghan mujahidin have foiled the Soviet-Karmal forces' attack in the Taqsar area of Qandahar Province. The attack was launched toward the end of last month. The mujahidin killed a number of Soviet-Karmal soldiers and damaged 22 military vehicles and tanks. Some 21 Karmal soldiers joined the mujahidin.

According to other reports, the military chief of the southwest zone, Major General Abdul Hakim, was injured and his guard was killed in an attack by the mujahidin somewhere between Qandahar airport and the (?military) division.

Airliner Crashes on Approach to Dhaka Airport

BK051300 Dhaka Overseas Service in English 1230 GMT 5 Aug 84

[Text] A Fokker F-47 aircraft of the Bangladesh airliner while returning from Chittagong met with an accident in Dhaka moments before landing at the Zia International Airport this afternoon. Nobody survived the crash. The Biman flight No. BG 426 with 45 passengers, 2 cockpit and 2 cabin crew took off from Chittagong on schedule at 1330. While it was approaching the runway in Dhaka from the northern end during an extreme bad weather and incessant rains, Dhaka control tower suddenly lost contact with the aircraft. Cockpit and cabin crew of the ill-fated aircraft were Captain (Faiz), First Officer Rukhsana, Flight Steward Amirul, and Flight Steward Zakir. The passengers included one lady and two foreign nationals. Twelve persons were booked for Dhaka, 10 for Dubayy, 10 for Abu Dhabi, 12 for Muscat, and 1 for Dahran. Salvage operation with the help of Army team, Air Force helicopters, and Navy divers were immediately engaged.

AFP: No Survivors

BK051420 Hong Kong AFP in English 1410 GMT 5 Aug 84

[Text] Dhaka, Aug 5 (AFP) — All 49 people on board a Bangladesh Airlines' Fokker 27 were killed when the plane crashed short of Dhaka's international airport today, airport officials said.

The plane, on a domestic flight from Chittagong, landed about two kilometres short of the runway and plunged into a ditch filled with several feet of water, the officials said.

The dead were 44 passengers and five crew. Among them were 33 passengers on their way to pick up flights to Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Muscat and Dahran. There were two foreigners but their nationalities were not known They were on their way from the port city of Chittagong, south east Bangladesh, to pick up a flight to Dubai. The crew included a woman co-pilot, First Officer Miss Rukhsana.

The plane gave no distress signal. But an official said that the pilot had sought permission from the control tower to land.

Dhaka Announces Death of Rear Admiral Khan

BK061003 Dhaka Overseas Service in Bengali 0900 GMT 6 Aug 84

[Excerpt] With deep grief and sorrow, we are announcing that the deputy chief martial law administrator, agriculture minister, and naval chief, Rear Admiral M.A. Khan, is dead. We are for God and we will go back to Him. [phrase from Koran] He died in Dhaka'a Combined Military Hospital at 0830 from a severe heart attack.

Coordinated Plane Crash Rescue

BK060706 Hong Kong AFP in English 0659 GMT 6 Aug 84

Admiral Khan fell ill while coordinating rescue work for a Bangladesh plane that crashed on landing here yesterday, killing all 49 people on board. He was transferred to a military hospital in Dhaka early today.

Continued Reportage on Madras Airport Bombing

Gandhi Comments

BK031626 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 3 Aug 84

[Excerpts] The death toll in the bomb explosion in Meenambakkam airport in Madras has gone up to 23. The Sri Lanka airline has announced that it has canceled all flights to Madras. However, the airline clarified that it will operate all flights to other Indian cities as scheduled.

The prime minister, Mrs Gandhi, has condemned the bomb blast at Madras airport. In response to a message from the Sri Lankan President, Mr Jayewardene, the prime minister said that both the governments should take steps to prevent the recurrence of all such forms of (?meaningless) violence. Mrs Gandhi also urged Mr Jayewardene to convey her deepest sympathies to the bereaved families in Sri Lanka.

The union minister for tourism and civil aviation, Mr Khursheed Alam Khan, and the minister of state for finance, Mr S.M. Krishna, will be visiting Madras tomorrow for an on-the-spot study of the bomb blast.

In the Rajya Sabha today, the Communist Party of India member, Mr Kalyan Sundaram, expressed concern about the explosion. Raising the issue through a special mention, he asked the government to make a statement on it.

Here is a message just received: According to agency reports, the death toll in the explosion at Meenambakkam airport in Madras has risen to 24.

Sri Lankan Tamil Suspected

BK040711 Hong Kong AFP in English 0654 GMT 4 Aug 84

[By Govindan Unny]

[Text] New Delhi, Aug 4 (AFP) — Police today put Sri Lankan Tamil separatists under surveillance as clues mounted that one of their number was behind the bomb blast on Thursday which has killed at least 32 people, press reports said.

The death toll today rose to 32 with the discovery of more bodies, but PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said some bodies were believed still buried in the debris and at least 10 others, several of them with multiple injuries, were in hospital. Most of the victims were Sri Lankan passengers of an Indian Airlines flight from Colombo who were waiting for a connecting flight to Sharjah in the Gulf.

Police have so far drawn a blank in their hunt for the militant, identified as Kadiresan, who was said to have checked in with the two suitcases containing the explosives for an Air Lankan flight for Colombo, the daily *STATESMAN* reported quoting police sources. However Mr Kadiresan, who is wanted by Sri Lanka police, failed to board the plane, it said. He is one of a number of separatist militants on a police list who escaped to India soon after the bloody anti-Tamil riots on the island in July last year, the paper said. The police believe the bomb was meant to explode in Colombo airport as the timing device was set for it to go off after the plane's scheduled landing at the Sri Lankan capital, the paper added. Anonymous phone calls warning the airport authorities that a bomb was about to go off were intended to prevent any damage that might antagonise Indian Tamils against the Tamil separatist movment in Sri Lanka, it said.

Meanwhile a PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) dispatch from Madras, capital of the southern state of Tamil Nadu, said a body grouping several Tamil separatist organisations had condemned the explosion. The body called it a "cowardly act of some elements" trying to disrupt the support of Tamil Nadu people for the liberation movement. The Tamil separatists, who charge that Sri Lanka's Sinhalese majority discriminates against the Tamil minority, are demanding a Tamil state in the north and east of the country, and have enjoyed wide support in Tamil Nadu.

A spokesman for the Liberation Tigers in Madras, meanwhile, has blamed the Israeli intelligence agency, Mosad, for the blast, according to the statesman. The spokesman said the explosion was "the handiwork of Mosad of Israel, hired by the Sri Lankan Government to repress the liberation struggle of the ethnic minority on the island." A team of Israeli intelligence experts are currently training Sri Lankan security forces.

Tamil Nadu Chief Secretary B.K. Chockalingam admitted that after receipt of the anonymous phone calls, the airport authorities had delayed before taking preventive action on the explosives, *THE STATESMAN* said. Mr Chockalingam was quoted as saying that customs men took the baggage abandoned in the airport departure lounge to the arrival lounge for examination according to the usual procedure. But before they could start the examination, the bomb exploded, shattering the lounge, he added. The daily *INDIAN EXPRESS* cited police as saying that preliminary investigations were centred around the theory that some Sri Lankan terrorists wanted to hijack the Air Lanka flight. If the hijacking could not be carried out, they wanted to abandon the baggage containing the explosives at the Colombo airport.

The Madras police also stepped up security arrangements at the Sri Lankan deputy high commissioner's office yesterday as High Commission officials cooperated with police in trying to trace the suspected terrorists. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran, in a statement to the press, described the explosion "as an act of conspiracy by some anti-social elements" and urged people not to be carried away by rumours.

Deaths Set at 29

BK041602 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 4 Aug 84

[Excerpt] The work of clearing the debris from the scene of the bomb explosion at the Meenambakkam Airport has almost been completed. The union ministers of state, Mr Khursheed Alam Khan and Mr S.M. Krishna, visited the airport today and held discussions with officials. Speaking to newsmen, Mr Khan said that the death toll was 29. Earlier reports had put the figure at 32.

'Foreign Hand' Possibly Involved

BK041742 Hong Kong AFP in English 1730 GMT 4 Aug 84

[Excerpts] New Delhi, Aug 4 (AFP) — The involvement of a foreign hand in Thursday's bomb blast at Madras international airport, which claimed 32 lives, cannot be ruled out, a top government official said in Madras.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) quoted Chief Secretary of the south Indian Tamil Nadu state K. Chockalingam as saying that it was not a country bomb and it had been identified as a "sophisticated, powerful device." Federal Civil Aviation Minister Kursheed Alam Khan, who visited the airport today, told the press that possible foreign involvement in the incident would be looked into by a government enquiry commission.

Mr. Khan told the press earlier that a passenger, Kadiresan, who checked in but failed to board the Air Lanka flight to Colombo, had obtained his ticket through a travel agent in Delhi. The passenger could have then gone to Madras either by air or by rail with the baggage containing the explosives, PTI quoted him as saying. The minister also said international flights to and from Madras would be resumed on Monday.

Gandhi in Himachal, Comments on Foreign Actions

Says Aim 'Tension, Hatred'

BK050612 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 5 Aug 84

[Text] The prime minister has said that the opposition parties are spreading the regionalism, which will only affect the poor people in backward areas. Mrs Gandhi warned the people to remain vigilant against such forces. She was addressing a meeting of Congress-I workers at Kyelang in Himachal Pradesh yesterday. Mrs Gandhi also said that the television and radio network will be extended to far-flung areas for the benefit of people living in remote places.

Earlier, addressing a public meeting at (Keelar) in Lahaul Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh yesterday, Mrs Gandhi pointed out that some foreign powers are trying to create tension and sow seeds of communal hatred. Mrs Gandhi said some people of Indian origin living in other countries are being influenced by these forces. The prime minister said that the government is doing everything possible to improve the condition of people living in backward areas and hilly regions.

Claims Vigilance Needed

BK050945 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 5 Aug 84

[Text] The prime minister, Mrs Gandhi, has said that India wants peace and friendship with all the countries, especially the neighboring ones. However, she said the country has to remain vigiliant because we have been attacked five times and sophisticated arms are being stockpiled in the neighborhood. The prime minister was addressing officers and men of the Border Roads Organization at (Atinghi) in the Lahaul valley of Himachal Pradesh this morning. She pointed out that some of the foreign powers are out to disintegrate the country and are inciting separatist forces.

Says U.S. Supporting Sikhs

BK060735 London BBC World Service in English 0015 GMT 6 Aug 84

[Mark Tully report in "Radio Newsreel" program]

[Text] The speech by the Indian prime minister, Mrs Gandhi, in which for the first time she directly accused the United States of encouraging Sikh separatism in the Punjab was made to a paramilitary unit in the Himalayan foothills. She was in the region at the usual start of her reelection campaign. Our Delhi correspondent Mark Tully says her remarks may well indicate the thrust of her campaign strategy.

[Begin Tully recording] Mrs Gandhi did not name the CIA, but it would be assumed by everyone that she was referring to it when she said that a Washington-based espionage agency was abetting separatism in the Punjab. The Indian prime minister went on to say that the demand for a separate Sikh state was not being made anywhere in India but from certain people settled abroad, obviously at the instigation of the foreign agency. While the Indian Government was deciding its White Paper on the Army action in the Golden Temple — the Sikh's holy shrine — the American Government made it clear through diplomatic channels that it would have to review its relations with India if America was directly accused of being involved in the Sikh separatist movement. Since then Mrs Gandhi has made a series of statements, including two long speeches in Parliament in which she had avoided directly accusing America of involvement, although she had alleged the involvement of foreign forces. Her current tour of the Himalayan state of Himachal Pradesh is seen as the opening of her election campaign. Her term of office ends at the beginning of next year. It looks, therefore, that Mrs Gandhi has decided to face the diplomatic consequences of directly accusing America of involvement in the Sikh separatist movement in order to lend weight to her claim that India is threatened by foreign powers and she is the only leader who can withstand that thrust. [word indistinct] threat is going to be one of the main points of her election campaign. [end Tully recording]

Spokesman Clarifies Charge

BK060913 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 6 Aug 84

[Text] An official spokesman clarified in New Delhi today that the prime minister had not charged a Washington-based espionage agency with abetment of separatism in Punjab. He pointed out that the report appearing in the press in this context has incorrectly quoted the prime minister. The spokesman said that Mrs Gandhi in her address to the jawans [soldiers] of the border road organization at Kyelang in Lahaul-Spiti in Himachal Pradesh yesterday, had merely reiterated what she had often stated earlier — that separatist movements have their origin and support from abroad. She made no reference to any support by any

government agencies but cautioned people to be vigilant about dangers of secessionist movements instigated from abroad.

At a public meeting at Kulu today, the prime minister herself said that there are people in foreign countries who have gone abroad and who have become rich but did not know what is the position in India, and they are helping extremists in India and inciting them. Mrs Gandhi said she did not mention any country or organization even now or earlier.

ISI: U.S. 'Abetting' Separatism

BK060958 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 0851 GMT 6 Aug 84

["India for Peace With All Countries: PM —'U.S. Agency Agency Abetting Separatism'" —ISI headline]

[Text] Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi said while addressing public meeting at Kaza in Spiti Valley on the second day of her three day visit to Himachal Pradesh that some foreign powers were giving arms to poor countries but not aid for development purposes. Their intensions were clear, she said. They aimed at the utilisation of the resources of developing countries and to ensure that they got allies in case of a world war.

Earlier addressing officers and jawans [soldiers] of the border roads organisation near Kyelang, the prime minister accused some foreign powers of inciting separatist elements in the country.

She said these powers were again engaged in their evil designs and were busy provoking riots in the country. Mrs Gandhi said separatist demands did not come from anywhere in India, not even from Akali Dal, but from certain people settled abroad at the instigation of foreign agencies.

She said an espionage agency in Washington was abetting some people to voice separatism. She said in pre-independence days foreigners used to incite communal ill will to see that the struggle for independence was not fought unitedly by Indians. Fortunately, however, leaders of various religious parties were not taken in, and India achieved freedom.

Referring to Punjab developments Mrs Gandhi said Akal Takht repairs had to be done in the larger interests of communal amity as perpetuation of the damaged portion would only embitter the atmosphere. She disclosed that two days prior to "Operation Blue Star Cross," firing had taken place among terrorists in the Golden Temple complex damaging the temple as informed to her by Akali Dal Chief Harchand Singh Longowal.

Mrs Gandhi paid tributes to Sikhs who she said had established themselves once again after suffering the worst during 1947 communal riots.

She said it was no use brooding over the past and everybody must now work for unity and build up the Punjab. Mrs Gandhi said now there were only two armymen posted at Toshakhana in the Golden Temple while others were outside it. She said there was no Army presence in Prikarma or in other buildings of the Golden Temple complex.

The prime minister said the government was keen on withdrawing the Army but terrorists had to be flushed out and security of all ensured.

Update on Kashmir Notes Curfew Briefly Relaxed

BK031636 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 3 Aug 84

[Text] The situation in Kashmir valley continues to be normal. Our Srinagar correspondent reports that curfew was relaxed in the city today for 2 hours in the afternoon to enable the people to offer Friday prayers. Prayers were offered at all the mosques. A large congregation attended Hazrat Bal, Jama Masjid, Shahi Masjid, and other mosques. Except in curfew-bound areas, offices, banks, and business establishments functioned normally and vehicles plied as usual.

Six members of Parliament belonging to the National Conference have criticized the police firing in Srinagar on Wednesday. In a statement in New Delhi today, they demanded a judicial inquiry into the incident. The signatories to the statement include Prof (Saifuddin Chaur), Mr Abdul Rashid Kabli, and Mr Ghulam Rasul Makki.

Eight more suspected extremists, including the president of the state unit of the banned All Indian Sikh Students' Federation, were arrested from the border town of Punch. An official spokesman told our Jammu correspondent that 48 suspected extremists have been arrested in Jammu division so far, out of which 32 are detained under the state public safety act.

Meanwhile, the state pradesh Lok Dal secretary, Mr (Meknath Yogi), has welcomed the state government's action against the antinational elements. Prohibitory orders under Section 144 [banning assembly of five or more persons in one place] have been extended in the municipal limits of the Jammu City till the 10th of this month.

The National Democratic Alliance [NDA] has demanded that the Jammu and Kashmir resettlement act should be repealed. A resolution adopted by the central coordination committee was released by the general secretary of the NDA, Mr Vijay Kumar Malhotra, in New Delhi today.

Soviet Cargo Plane Crashes Near Nawabshah

BK041726 Karachi Domestic Service in English 1710 GMT 4 Aug 84

[Text] A Soviet cargo aircraft on its way to Tashkent crashed near Nawabshah between 1700 and 1800 [1200 GMT to 1300 GMT] today. The Soviet aircraft which was on its way from Aden to Tashkent had to land at Karachi at 1500 [1000 GMT] today due to some technical fault. After necessary repairs, the aircraft took off for Tashkent. However, according to a later report it crashed near Nawabshah. The aircraft was carrying 8 crew members and 10 passengers. Search parties of Army, the civil aviation authorities and civil administration had already rushed to the area. So far there is no report about the fate of those on board the plane. The Soviet Embassy in Islamabad has been informed about it.

Zia Expresses Condolences

BK051646 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 5 Aug 84

[Text] President General Mohammad Ziaul Haq has expressed deep sorrow and grief at the crash of a Soviet aircraft in Pakistan and the resulting loss of life. In a message addressed to the Soviet president, Mr Chernenko, on his own behalf and on behalf of the people and Government of Pakistan, the president expressed sympathy with the bereaved families and prayed that they may have the courage to bear this grief.

17 Bodies Recovered

BK060152 Karachi Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 5 Aug 84

[Excerpts] Seventeen bodies have so far been recovered from the wreckage of the ill-fated Soviet plane, which crashed near Nawabshah yesterday. The Soviet aircraft was operating on a special chartered flight from Aden to Tashkent when it crashed between 1700 and 1800 yesterday. The plan had a technical landing in Karachi earlier.

An investigating team is now working in Nawabshah to determine the cause of the crash and to locate the bodies of the victims of the crash. The exact number of personnel on board the flight is yet to be ascertained, but it is assumed that apart from 9 crew members, there were 10 passengers on board the aircraft also.

The Pakistan authorities have arranged a special chartered flight to carry the officials of the Soviet Embassy and the Soviet airlines Aeroflot to the site of the crash.

President Discusses Improving Relations With India

BK051044 Karachi Domestic Service in English 1005 GMT 5 Aug 84

[Text] The president, General Mohammad Ziaul Haq, has said it is his considered view that friendly atmosphere between Pakistan and India should not only be maintained but improvement in relations achieved over the last 7 years be carried forward. This is in the best interest of the two countries. Talking to newsmen in Islamabad this morning, the president said Pakistan's efforts for normalizing relations with India and its unilateral steps on a number of occasions to ensure that the atmosphere was not polluted have been highly appreciated by the world. He emphasized that sentimental statements should be avoided so that the atmosphere should not pollute.

Answering a question on the recent statement by the Indian prime minister, particularly the one in which she ruled out possibility of signing a no war pact with Pakistan, the president said he had not yet gone through the full text of Mrs Gandhi's statement made in Parliament, but we have to take into account the (?place) in which she had made the statement.

Replying a question about the forthcoming round of indirect talks in Geneva on Afghanistan, the president expressed the hope that there would be further progress in their efforts to achieve a comprehensive political settlement of the problem.

Zia on Elections, Official's Canceled Moscow Visit

BK061036 Karachi Domestic Service in English 1005 GMT 6 Aug 84

[Text] President Mohammad Ziaul Haq has said the program for holding the next general elections has been finalized and will be announced in a package just before the start of a short election campaign. He was talking to newsmen at the Lahore airport on arrival from Islamabad today on a short visit.

The president said if the coming elections were held on party basis, their contact with the political leaders and the parties will become necessary. Even in case the elections were held on nonparty basis, the government would seek cooperation of politicians who were experienced and were men of integrity.

In reply to a question about the foreign secretary's visit to Moscow, the president said the visit was not going to affect the Geneva talks in any way. He said he was quite hopeful of some headway at the talks.

Foreign Secretary Leaves for DPRK Visit

BK060626 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 0600 GMT 6 Aug 84

[Text] Foreign Secretary Niaz A. Naik left Karachi for Pyongyang this morning on a 4-day official visit to the DPRK. He will exchange views with his DPRK counterpart on bilateral relations and international issues. The foreign secretary will also call on President Kim Il-song.

SRI LANKA

Reportage on Reaction to Madras Airport Bombing

AFP: President Comments

BK031359 Hong Kong AFP in English 1343 GMT 3 Aug 84

[Text] Colombo, Aug 3 (AFP) — Sri Lankan President Junius Jayewardene today urged Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to join him in fighting terrorism, it was announced here.

He was commenting on a bomb blast at Madras Airport in Tamil Nadu State, southern India, late yesterday in which at least 23 people, including a Sri Lankan woman, were killed.

There is widespread support in Tamil Nadu, traditional home of Indian Tamils, for Sri Lanka's ethnic Tamils who are campaigning for more autonomy.

President Jayewardene said terrorism had become an "ugly monster challenging the very foundation of the international community and its values."

A spokesman for the national carrier Air Lanka said it was operating flights to India normally, with the exception of Madras were the airport was closed today for three days.

Air Lanka Planes Targeted

BK041112 Colombo International Service in English 1030 GMT 4 Aug 84

[Text] The bomb blast which occurred at Madras airport on Thursday night was part of a misfired plan by terrorists to blow up two Air Lanka planes in Colombo. According to Defense Ministry sources, if the bombs hidden in two suitcases had been carried to Colombo, they would have exploded at the airport, judging from the time of the explosion. They said that these bombs would have blown up two planes on the ground at Katunayaka International Airport in Colombo possibly killing many people.

The death toll in the blast has risen to 32 with the discovery of 3 more bodies. The Foreign Ministry has said that a Sri Lankan woman was among those killed and four other Sri Lankans were among the injured in the explosion. The Sri Lankan victims had been in a transit lounge on their way to Bombay for a connecting flight to the Gulf when the blast ripped through the airport.

The Defense Ministry sources pointed out that Sri Lanka's investigations showed that the bombing was planned by terrorists. They said two suitcases tagged Madras-Colombo-Paris and Madras-Colombo-London were checked in at the Air Lanka counter at Madras airport on Thursday. But due to tight security precaution by Air Lanka, it was unloaded and found after the check that no passenger had claimed them. The sources said that if the two suitcases had been brought to Colombo, they would have been put on two other Air Lanka planes, a Lockheed bound for Paris, and a jumbo jet which took off for London 25 minutes late at the time of explosion.

Colombo Airport Security Heightened

BK040832 Hong Kong AFP in English 0812 GMT 4 Aug 84

[Excerpts] Colombo, Aug 4 (AFP) — Security was stepped up at Colombo's international airport today with a round-the-clock bomb disposal squad on duty amid fears of attacks on Air Lankan aircraft, it was announced here. From yesterday Colombo airport authorities clamped down on left luggage facilities and strengthened security measures. All unattended baggage inside airport premises will be confiscated, airport services chief Brigadier S.L. Ranatunge said.

Security has been tightened at restricted areas such as customs, immigration and the transit lounge. Only security-screened policemen and senior government officials will be allowed in, he said.

Sources here suspect that the Madras bombing, in which at least one Sri Lankan was killed and several others wounded, was the work of militant Tamil separatists. Some of the militants seeking to set up an independent Tamil state in the country's north and east are known to be operating out of the southern Indian State of Tamil Nadu, of which Madras is the capital.

Government Seeks To Investigate

BK050840 Hong Kong AFP in English 0821 GMT 5 Aug 84

[Excerpts] Colombo, Aug 5 (AFP) — Sri Lanka has sought India's permission to send its own team of investigators to look into a bomb blast at Madras airport in southern India on Thursday night which killed at least 32 people, the newspaper *THE WEEKEND* reported today. Two high ranking police officers picked by the Defence Ministry were standing by for Indian approval to leave for Madras, the newspaper said.

Investigators were confident that the attack was the work of militant Tamil separatists who have been operating out of the southern Indian State of Tamil Nadu for many months. "For quite some time now we have been warning the Tamil Nadu authorities. Even now it is not too late for them to take steps against terrorists living in Madras. Otherwise it will cause harm to innocent people," Minister of National Security Lalith Athulathmudali was quoted as telling *THE WEEKEND*.

Colombo has accused New Delhi of allowing Tamil separatists to train in the southern state. India has denied the charges.

Premadasa Proposes Joint Inquiry

BK051055 Colombo International Service in English 1030 GMT 5 Aug 84

[Text] Prime Minister Premadasa yesterday proposed the holding of a joint inquiry by Sri Lanka and India into the Madras bomb explosion. He said that his recent allegations that the terrorists were operating from India were proved by the bomb explosion at the Madras International Airport. However, he regretted that the Indian Government did not accept his allegations. The prime minister was addressing a public meeting which followed the opening of several development projects at Waligama yesterday.

Mr Premadasa recalled that Sri Lanka and India had friendly relations for thousands of years. He added that the duty of a friendly country should always be not to disrupt that friendship.

Mr Premadasa said that certain sections, who were jealous of the government's achievements in the field of development, were resorting to violent activities and launching terrorist campaign from India. These groups have declared war against Sri Lanka.

The prime minister appealed to India even at this late stage to join with the Sri Lanka Government to eradicate this menace. He said that the entire world was now aware of the fact that a major campaign is being launched from India against the sovereignty of Sri Lanka.

Tamils Killed in Shootout With Navy Patrol Craft

BK041413 Hong Kong AFP in English 1358 GMT 4 Aug 84

[Text] Colombo, Aug 4 (AFP) — Two suspected Tamil separatists were killed and three wounded early today in a shootout with security forces that also left three Navy men dead, informed sources here said.

A Navy patrol craft had challenged a boat in Sri Lanka's surveillance zone heading for shore near the northern Jaffna district, in waters separating the country from India.

The boat landed at a beach and its occupants began shooting at the patrol, which returned fire, the sources said. Security forces later cordoned off Jaffna airport and rounded up some 200 youths in attempt to find escaped suspects.

The shootout came in the wake of a bomb explosion on Thursday at Madras airport, southern India, in which at least 32 people died. Sources here suspect the bombing was the work of Tamil separatists seeking to set up an independent Tamil state in northern and eastern Sri Lanka.

Minister Praises Naval Officers

BK041555 Colombo Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 4 Aug 84

[Text] Sri Lankan naval forces killed four terrorists at Karinagal at Jaffna today and lost two of their men in the latest ambush launched by the northern terrorists. The minister of national security, Lalith Athulathmudali, rushed to the (?scene) from Colombo and made arrangements for the Armed Forces to pay respect to the two dead officers. Praising the naval officers of the Karinagal Navy camp, the minister expressed the government's sorrow at the death of the two naval officers. The Armed Forces also attacked a terrorist camp at Mankhulam. A number of terrorists were injured in exchange of fire. However, the Armed Forces were able to detect large amounts of guns, ammunition and rifles from the terrorists. They have discovered for the first a stock of terrorists uniform.

Khomeyni Receives Prime Minister 6 August

LD061050 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 6 Aug 84

[From the news headlines]

[Text] The prime minister was received in audience by Imam Khomeyni, the leader of the revolution and the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, this morning. He presented a report to the imam of the nation on general and political issues of the country and also on his decision to present his Cabinet to the Islamic Consultative Assembly.

Clandestine Radios Report on Khomeyni's Health

Bani-Sadr: Khomeyni 'Very Ill'

GF051248 (Clandestine) Free Voice of Iran in Persian 500 GMT 4 Aug 84

[Text] Abolhasan Bani-Sadr, the former president of the Khomeyni regime, announced in a statement that the hijackers were acting under orders of certain groups in the ruling clique in Iran. He said that Ayatollah Khomeyni is very ill and for this reason he failed to express his opinion regarding the hijackers of the aircraft. Bani-Sadr said the hijacking of the French aircraft by the extremist group was possibly carried out to undermine the efforts for making peace with Iraq and for neutralizing certain officials who favor renewal of relations with the West.

Illness 'Acute'

GF061004 (Clandestine) Radio Nejat-e Iran in Persian 1630 GMT 5 Aug 84

[Text] The illness of Ruhollah Khomeyni has become acute. Three foreign physicians are presently attending at his bed. Following previous reports, *THE WASHINGTON POST*, quoting foreign diplomats resident in Tehran, this morning reported that the condition of Khomeyni, who has a heart ailment, is deteriorating each day and at present three physicians — a Soviet, Swiss, and German — are consulting in Jamaran.

The Nejat-e Iran correspondent in this connection adds that the rumors that have been circulating in Tehran since the beginning of this week have caused movement and activity in circles close to the clerical regime. The chairman of the central committee of the regime announced last Friday that Mahdavi Kani had ordered the Islamic committees to be on the alert. Furthermore, according to eyewitnesses, an unusual number of automobiles belonging to the committee has been seen on the streets.

During the past 6 days, automobiles carrying Revolution Guard forces have been seen entering the Zolfaqar headquarters. The Nejat-e Iran correspondent points out that the Zolfaqar guard is the same armed anticoup group which Khomeyni, apparently foreseeing his own death, ordered formed.

Khomeyni has defined in his will the scope and powers of this guard in times of crisis and emergency and has chosen five persons, whose names have not been disclosed, to take action during such times.

LE MONDE: Bani-Sadr on Hijacking, Power Struggle

PM061127 Paris LE MONDE in French 5-6 Aug 84 pp 1, 3

[Jean Gueyras report: "The Post-Khomeyni Era Has Already Begun"]

[Excerpts] In a statement made to *LE MONDE* Friday 3 August, former Iranian President Bani-Sadr, said that the hijacking of the Boeing could only be explained in the framework of the power struggle raging in Tehran between the "moderates" and the "extremists." Citing reliable information, Mr Bani-Sadr said that the struggle for the succession took a new turn in Iran around mid-July following a deterioration in Imam Khomeyni's health.

According to the former Iranian president, the imam was rushed into hospital 12 July after new heart problems and his condition was regarded as critical for 48 hours. He added, however, that Khomeyni's health has improved.

The possibility of the imam's death, Mr Bani-Sadr said, has prompted the hard-line faction in power in Tehran to step up the repression against oppositionists inside the country. "For instance," he said, "more than 150 oppositionists from all factions were executed in mid-July," and Rayshahri, a military judge, was appointed head of the large information and security ministry which operates as a political police force. Mr Bani-Sadr also blamed the Iranian "extremists" for the persecution campaign against women, forced to abide strictly by Islamic dress.

Mr Bani-Sadr also said that the regime's hard-liners are concerned by the fact that the "moderates" seem to want a diplomatic settlement of the conflict with Iraq. He believes that the Iranian Government recently offered Baghdad a compromise solution, using Saudi Arabia as an intermediary — a solution which apparently no longer makes President Saddam Husayn's departure a precondition. The latter would simply be asked to stand aside symbolically. Tehran is apparently no longer demanding reparations and would be prepared to open peace negotiations immediately.

According to Mr Bani-Sadr, the mediation role played by Saudi Arabia explains the recent attempt to hikack a Saudi aircraft exposed in Madrid by the Spanish authorities. The hijackers in that case, he added, were planning to hijack the aircraft of Amir 'Abdallah Ibn al-Sa'ud, Saudi Arabia's crown prince.

"The post-Khomeyni era has already begun," Mr Bani-Sadr concluded. "If the imam dies, the extremists have no chance of winning, that is why they are stepping up their acts of sabotage to scuttle the initiatives of the 'moderates' who want an open diplomatic approach to the West and a peaceful settlement to the war with Iraq."

Air France Hijackers Request Political Asylum

LD041052 Tehran IRNA in English 1034 GMT 4 Aug 84

[Text] Tehran, Aug 4, IRNA — The three hijackers of the Air France Boeing 737 have asked the Islamic Republic of Iran's officials for political asylum, said a spokesman of the Foreign Affairs Ministry here today.

The spokesman said that it is now clear from the investigations that the hijackers are Muslims from Lebanon. He further told IRNA that the investigation of the hijackers, who are now in detention, is being continued.

The spokesman added that last Thursday afternoon, the hijackers, under the pretext of taking medicine of one of the passengers from the cargo compartment of the plane, had in fact taken arms and explosives which they had in their suitcases and transferred them inside the plane.

AFP: Paper Calls Hijacking Act 'Against Terrorism'

NC041035 Paris AFP in English 1029 GMT 4 Aug 84

[Text] Tehran, Aug 4 (AFP) — The hijacking last Tuesday of an Air France jet was an "an act against terrorism" in the West, the newspaper of the ruling Islamic Republican Party *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI]* said today, warning that "the children of Islam" are prepared to take further action against French interests.

The newspaper's editorial, entitled "anti-terrorism," appeared to bolster speculation that the Tehran government would be unlikely to punish the three hijackers. Their whereabouts remained unknown today.

(French newspapers have even suggested that Iran may have passively aided the hijackers, by allowing them to gain access to the luggage bay after the plane reached Tehran. Passengers said many of the weapons were produced by the pirates only after the plane reached Tehran.)

Referring to French President Francois Mitterrand, the Islamic Republic newspaper said:

"At a time when Mitterrand and his clique are continuing to intervene in the Islamic world, they must accept the fact that there are young Moslems ready to sacrifice their lives to inflict blows on France and take revenge in the name of Islam against the French terrorists who govern France."

"The diversion of the French plane cannot be called a simple terrorist act," the newspaper said. "Those who did this wanted to give a bitter lesson to the French leaders. What happend to this plane is an act against terrorism."

"The children of Islam are everywhere in the world, and they now have shown that they are not indifferent to acts of revenge by French authorities against Islam," the newspaper said. "They will deal the necessary blows against a government that supports the interests of a government that backs terrorists."

"It is up to the French government to decide whether it will continue its illogical and vengeful support for the hypocrites and counter-revolutionaries who are in France," the newspaper said.

The term "hypocrites" is used here to designate the people's mojahedin, a Paris-based group opposed to the Islamic Republic, while "counter-revolutionaries" is a word used for supporters of the late shah, whose sister, Ashraf Pahlavi, is also based in Paris.

The hijackers took 60 people hostage Tuesday on an Air France Boeing 737 bound from Frankfurt to Paris, and commandeered it to Geneva, Beirut and Cyprus before reaching Tehran.

Once there, they demanded that France release five persons who had tried to kill the shah's last prime minister, Shahpur Bakhtiar, in Paris in 1980.

France and Iran are also at odds over French arms sales to Iraq, with which Iran has been at war for almost four years. Because of these differences, it was viewed in Paris as unlikely that the hijackers would be punished here.

Majlis Give Vote of Confidence to Musavi

LD051430 Tehran IRNA in English 1423 GMT 5 Aug 84

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 5, IRNA — The Majlis voted 163 to 21 in favour of Prime Minister Mir-Hoseyn Musavi call for a vote of confidence. There were 25 abstentions.

The vote came in a special session of the Majlis this afternoon and after more than six hours of deliberations.

Out of the 270 members, the Majlis currently has more than 250 but the credentials of all of them have not been approved.

Further Report

LD051752 Tehran IRNA in English 1725 GMT 5 Aug 84

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 5, IRNA — Prime Minister Mir-Hoseyn Musavi received 163 votes for and 21 against in the Majlis vote of confidence after more than six hours of debate by the deputies today. There were 25 abstentions.

In the open session of the Majlis, Mir-Hoseyn Musavi defended his call for the confidence vote in a two-hour speech on the performance of his Cabinet in office for 33 months.

"In relations to foreign policy, the war and the problems which we had three years ago, we are now in a satisfactory condition," Mir-Hoseyn Musavi said.

Comparing the economic situation of the country when he took office with today, the prime minister gave figures showing a steady growth in the gross national product, stable foreign exchange reserves, lower inflation and more investment by the private sector. The deputies who spoke in favour noted the achievements of the Government, despite the pressures of war while the opposition mainly pointed at economic bottlenecks.

Speaking in favour, Majlis Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani said he would not deny the fact that affairs could have been managed better but as a whole the government of the Islamic Republic "has done miracles in its successes."

The prime minister said his Cabinet took office in November 1981 when there was political tension with Western-influenced liberals, a terrorist campaign against the state and the occupation of the country by the Iraqi forces. All these, he said, had a diverse effect on the economy.

Foreign reserves had also dropped substantiaily because of economic sanctions by the West and reduced oil sales. "In Mehr, Aban and Azar 1360 (Sept. 22-Dec. 21, 1981), we could not sell more than 300,000 barrels of oil (per day) and this was at a time when we had military purchases as well as wheat and cereals and we were alone in the world."

"Confronting this crisis on a wide-scale could be accounted as one of the honours of the servant government," Mir-Hoseyn Musavi said.

After a 15.7 percent drop in the GNP in the year 1357 (1978-79, during revolution) and another 15.4 percent in 1359 (1980-81, because of war), a slight increase of 2.8 percent was registered in 1360 (1981-82). He said this was the first GNP growth after the revolution which increased to 15.2 percent in 1361 (1982-83).

Inflation, he added, has dropped every year since 1359 when it reached an "unprecedented" 30 percent for wholesale goods and 23 percent for retail goods. Inflation was 22.8 percent in 1360, 19.2 in 1361 and 17.7 last year.

But he said "despite inflation's coninued drop from 1359 onwards, the inflation of prices are still considerably high and it is necessary to make constant efforts to eliminate this problem."

One way to do this was to reduce the government's dependency on the central bank and reducing its debts to the bank as soon as possible.

Responding to criticism on the government's high current expenditures, Mir-Hoseyn Musavi said this had been the result of war-costs which amount to 42 percent of the budget this year.

He said in 1358 defence spending was only 381 billion rials (dlrs 4.3 b) as compared to 1,117 billion rials (dlrs 12.7 b) this year, including the costs of the battle fronts, the war refugees and the martyrs' foundation.

On other economic achievements the prime minister said that wealth was being more equally shared today compared to several years ago.

In 1359, 61 percent of total consumption was taken up by 40 percent of the population. But in 1361 the consumption of this sector was reduced to 53.5 percent.

Only just over half of the development budget in 1359 was expended compared to 70 percent in 1360 and 90 percent in 1361.

The private sector laid down 42.5 percent of the total investments in 1361, amounting to 802 billion rials (dlrs 9.1 b). Also he said demand for industrial loans from the mines and industries bank in 1362 (1983-84) increased 30 percent and loan extension 21 percent.

"This shows the increased confidence of the private sector and the gradual elimination of the obstacles which existed in this respect."

Electricity provision to the rural areas was an average of four villages between 1357 and 1361. In 1362 the average increased to six villages a day despite a focus on the reconstruction of power lines in the war-devastated regions.

The prime minister said the most important projects underway were steel plants in Ahvaz and Mobarakeh, increasing production at the Sarcheshmeh copper complex, the petrochemical plants in Shiraz and Imam Khomeyni port and the Bandar Abbas-Bafq railway.

Other projects are to increase silo capacity, expanding the Arak machines factory and the Tabriz tractor factory and the Jiroft and Minab dams.

In the agricultural field, he said with the completion of irrigation projects in 19 regions, 450,000 hectares would be covered, of which 225,000 hectares would receive better irrigation and 225,000 would go under irrigation for the first time.

He called on the Majlis to prepare a law on agricultural lands as soon as possible.

On foreign policy, Mir-Hoseyn Husavi said the government's greatest success was to deprive the Iraqi regime of the leadership of the Nonaligned Movement after "hundreds" of messages and meeting with Nonaligned Movement members. Iraq was to assume Nonaligned Movement leadership in 1983.

Another achievement, he added, was the strengthened relations with Syria and Libya.

Armed Forces Joint Staff Issues Communiques

No 1,808

LD031658 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 3 Aug 84

[Text] In its Communique No 1,808 the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran announced: Thanks to the fire of combative forces of Islam on the enemy positions, in the Piranshah, Sar Dasht and Hajj 'Umran sectors during the past 24 hours, the enemy's land formation was disrupted, activities of their engineering vehicles were halted, and a number of Iraqi troops were killed. Our units, on the border fronts of Bakhtaran and Ilam, while consolidating their own defensive positions, dispatched patrol teams and by continuous observation monitored the enemy activities. The fire of our units on the defensive psitions, tank emplacements, artillery and supply routes of the enemy, neutralized the movements of the Saddamist forces. The

enemy losses on these fronts included the destruction of eight weapon bunkers and five observation posts.

In the southern operational sector, the fire exchange was more intense in the Zeyd and Zubaydat regions yesterday. Our forces opened fire on the enemy positions on the western bank of the Arvand Rud, destroying more than 10 trenches and weapon emplacements.

No 1,809

LD041706 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 4 Aug 84

[Text] The Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran in its communique no 1,809 announced:

During the past 24 hours, sporadic artillery exchanges on northwestern fronts of the country from Piranshah to Sar Dasht region continued between our victorious forces and the Ba'thist mercenaries of Iraq. While defending their positions, our forces opened fire on enemy positions and front lines and succeeded in setting fire to more than 11 weapon emplacements, destroying one 82-mm mortar launcher belonging to the Saddamists and killing or wounding at least 22 Iraqi soldiers. On the border fronts of Bakhtaran and Ilam, our patrols kept an eye on the activities and movements of the enemy. The damage suffered by the enemy in this region includes the destruction of 7 vehicles, 1 106-mm gun, 1 Katyusha and 11 heavy weapon emplacements and observation posts. The number of casualties suffered by the enemy was two dead and a number wounded.

At 0150 hours yesterday morning an enemy patrol intended to infiltrate the positions of our forces in Sumar; but as a result of the fire of the selfless combatants of Islam, the enemy patrol sustained casualties and fled the area.

On the southern fronts of our country, our forces returned and silenced the fire of the Iraqi forces, monitored the logistic activities of the enemy and their reconnaissance operations and inflicted considerable damage and casualties on them. The Gendarmerie warriors destroyed more than 17 heavy and light weapon emplacements, 2 ammunition depots and two engineering vehicles and killed or wounded about 30 Ba'thist Zionist Iraqi mercenaries, west of Arvand Rud. The intensity of fire was concentrated in Shahrani, Shalamcheh and Zubaydat regions.

No 1,810

LD051728 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 5 AUG 84

[Text] The Joint Staff Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Communique No 1,810 announced:

During the past 24 hours, in the Hajj 'Umran operational region, the combatants of Islam opened fire on enemy positions, destroyed 10 heavy and light weapon emplacements, and killed or wounded more than 20 Saddamist mercenaries. In the same region, a number of enemy infantry personnel were detected, and their operations were foiled by fire from our units.

In Piranshah, Sar Dasht and Marivan operational regions, sporadic exchanges of fire continued. In the western operational region, our forces disrupted the activities of enemy engineering units, opened fire on Iraqi personnel positions, and killed or wounded 16 enemy soldiers. Our forces also destroyed 1 ammunition depot, 13 foxholes, and slit trenches belonging to the aggressors.

On southern fronts, confrontations between our forces and the enemy continued in the form of defensive combat. Fighting forces of Islam on each front defended the positions and areas under their protection, and set fire to parts of the enemy's front line. The damage inflicted on the enemy west of Arvand Rud includes the destruction of 14 foxholes and slit trenches, 1 mortar launcher, and 2 trucks. Twenty-five Iraqi soldiers were killed or wounded.